HH Shaikh Khalid chairs sixth BOC board meeting

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m H\,Shaikh\,Khalid\,bin\,Ham}$ ad Al Khalifa, First Deputy Chairman of the Supreme Council for Youth and Sports and President of both the General Sports Authority and Bahrain Olympic Committee, chaired the committee's sixth board meeting yesterday.

He began by welcoming board members and praising the achievements of national sports federations in the first half of 2025. He also marked the 46th anniversary of the Bahrain Olympic Committee, highlighting its long track record of sporting success.

sion and the 2024 adminis- medal prospects. trative report. It reviewed

Olympics, emphasizing athlete Fame ceremony.



HH Shaikh Khalid bin Hamad Al Khalifa attends the meeting

The meeting approved the development and a focus on minutes of the previous ses- new sports to boost Bahrain's

The board was briefed on Bahrain's external sports par- the planned Internationticipation plans for 2025-2026 al Center of Excellence and and discussed preparations for the regional office for aquatic hosting the 3rd Asian Youth sports, being developed with Games, set for October 22-31. GFH Financial Group. Finally, Shaikh Khalid also reviewed they reviewed the outcomes the Olympic Committee's of Bahrain's recent hosting of plans for the Los Angeles 2028 the FIBA Congress and Hall of

Bahrain leads region with fully local VAR rollout

Project executed without foreign support, setting a first in the Gulf

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The Bahrain Football Associ-**1** ation has become the first in the Gulf to implement the VAR (Video Assistant Referee) system entirely through local talent, without relying on foreign expertise.

Project Director Abdulrahman Abdulgader credited the success to strong backing from the country's sports leadership, particularly the full support of HH Shaikh Khalid bin Hamad Al Khalifa, First Deputy President of the Supreme Council for Youth and ident of the Bahrain Olympic start to finish. Committee.

Abdulgader also thanked BFA President Shaikh Ali bin Khal-Rashid Al Zubi, whose confi- "This is a proud achievement A referee monitor is installed

Sports, President of the Gener- dence and involvement in the — the only Gulf federation to al Sports Authority, and Pres- project were instrumental from carry out VAR with 100% local

Fully Local Execution

expertise," he said.

He explained that preparations begin the day before each Abdulgader noted that the en- match. Coordination involves ifa Al Khalifa, Vice President tire project was executed with linking the television broad-matches. HH Shaikh Khalifa bin Ali Al national staff, a milestone that cast truck, the VAR room, and Khalifa, and Secretary General sets Bahrain apart regionally. match officials on the pitch.

pitch-side, and a technician from the provider Hawk-Eye is present to ensure system readiness. On match day, work begins six hours before kickoff and includes an IT representative from the Bahrain FA.

Strategic Partnerships and Training

The project was a coordinated effort between the General Sports Authority (as funder and lead), the BFA (operator), production company Flamingo (for filming), and Bahrain TV (for broadcasts). Forty referees (VAR and AVAR) were selected by the Referees Committee and underwent certified theoretical and practical training.

Stadiums were chosen based on proximity to broadcast trucks, compliance with FIFA's technical standards, and international accreditation. The AFC also benefited from Bahrain's infrastructure during World Cup qualifiers, with the National Stadium used for official

Lando



Norris outpaces Piastri in fierce battle as Verstappen crashes on opening lap

Verstappen retires on lap one after **Antonelli collision**

AFP | Spielberg bei Knittelfeld

ando Norris set himself up for an emotional homecomng at next weekend's British Grand Prix when he resisted race-long pressure from McLaren team-mate Oscar Piastri to win the Austrian Grand Prix.

But while it was all smiles in the McLaren garage, Max Verstappen endured a dismal day, with the Red Bull four-time champion crashing out on the first lap, and his teammate Yuki Tsunoda trailing in last.

For Norris this was the 25-year-old Briton's first triumph on Red Bull's home tarmac to trim Piastri's lead in the title race to 15 points ahead of his and team's home event at Silverstone.

"It was a perfect result for the team -- a one-two is exactly what we want and we did it again," he said.

His happiness came also from achieving closure on their colhit Piastri and retired pointless, him. admitting he had "made a fool of myself".

This time, their thrilling tears and was a show of its own one for everyone to watch. following Verstappen's exit after his Red Bull was taken out when leaders McLaren to move to 417 with Red Bull.



Red Bull's Dutch driver Max Verstappen (L) and Mercedes' Italian driver Kimi Antonelli speak after their cars crashed



in 32 races that Max Verstappen failed to score points, ending one of the longest active streaks in Formula 1

lision at the Canadian Grand teenage rookie Kimi Antonelli quite enough. Thanks to the Prix two weeks earlier when he of Mercedes locked up and hit

"We had a great battle, that's for sure," said Norris.

"It was a lot of fun and stress. wheel-to-wheel battle was com- A nice battle, so well done to pleted without any rancour or Oscar! Hopefully, it was a nice 61 points adrift of Piastri in the and to Max, of course, because

points and a lead of 207 ahead of Ferrari, for whom Charles terday in qualifying," said Ver-Leclerc came home third and seven-time champion Lewis Hamilton fourth, their best result this year.

Piastri admitted he did his utmost to catch and pass Norris after passing Leclerc on the opening lap from third on the grid.

"I probably pushed the limit finish in the points. a bit far, but it was a good race and that's what we were here to best, as always, and my mental-rewarded do – to race each other and try ity will never change. We have today so and fight for wins. That's what we did today.

'Not ideal'

team. To have the kind of pace with a three-grid penalty at by Red car we've got."

Verstappen meanwhile is now His win enabled the runaway ing speculation about his future ger."

"It was just unlucky, like yesstappen.

"But overall we did not have great pace here and we have a RB. lot of learnings, and must find how to do better next weekend.

"It is not an ideal result." It was the first time in 32 races but we have that Verstappen had failed to worked

"We will keep trying to do our it has been won a lot in the past and some- I'm very times we have these times like happy, this."

He accepted Antonelli's apolo- Lawson, "It was close for me, but not gy instantly and with good grace. who was

The 18-year-old Italian, hit dumped we did whilst battling each oth- Silverstone, said: "I didn't nec- Bull afer, it was very impressive. I can't essarily brake too late, it's just ter just thank this team enough for the that when I braked hard behind two racother cars, I locked the rears.

"I feel super sorry to the team season. drivers' title race amid mount- obviously he was just a passen-

Lawson was all smiles after

